

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
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INFO AMEMASYY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
USINT HAVANA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY VALETTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2427

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, CH, GY
SUBJECT: PRC VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO'S VISIT TO GUYANA

1. SUMMARY: PRC VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO'S VISIT TO GUYANA, ALTHOUGH MORE CEREMONIAL THAN SUBSTANTIVE, WAS A SUCCESS. GUYANESE TOOK PARTICULAR PAINS, APPROACHING THOSE FOR A CHIEF OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT, TO INSURE THAT THE VICE PREMIER WAS WELL-RECEIVED AND THAT MEDIA TREATMENT WAS EXTENSIVE. ALTHOUGH A HALF HOUR MEETING ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED WITH PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM EXPANDED INTO THREE HOUR, THE PRESS COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF VIST MADE NO MENTION OF ANY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE OR OTHER SUBSTANTIVE HELP FOR THE GUYANESE. POLITIALLY, THE PRIME MINISTER PRESUMABLY FOUND THE VISIT USEFUL TO REMIND SOVIETS AND CUBANS THAT OTHER
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ROUTES EXIST TO THE ESTABLISHMEN OF MARXIAN SOCIALISM IN GUYANA. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE AND A DELEGATION OF TWENTY-SIX MEMBERS, PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO ARRIVED IN GUYANA ON JULY 21 AND DEPARTED ON JULY25. THE GUYANESE HAD ARRANGED A PERHAPS OVELY HEAVY SCHEDULE

WHICH INCLUDED VISITS TO CHINESE ASSISTANCE PROJECTS IN GUYANA (E.G., SANATA TEXTILE MILL, AND A TILE FACTORY), TALKS WITH VARIOUS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS INCLUDING A SCHEDULED ONE-HALF HOUR PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM WHICH STRETCHED INTO THREE HOURS, AND SIGHTSEEING WHICH INCLUDED A TRIP TO THE INTERIOR TO SEE GUYANA'S 740 FOOT KAIETEUR FALLS.

3. VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO APPEARED CHEERFUL BUT SOMEWHAT FATIGUED THE DAY OF HIS ARRIVAL AT A LARGE RECEPTION GIVEN BY THE GUYANESE FOREIGN MINISTER. GUYANESE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIALS SAID THAT THEY WERE TOLD THAT THE VICE PREMIER HAD HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND BECAME TIRED EASILY AND WOULD THEREFORE NOT TRAVEL WITHIN THE COUNTRY BY SMALL AIRCRAFT. LATER, HOWEVER, HE AGREED TO MAKE KAIETEUR AN EXCEPTION.

4. THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED MEDIA GAVE EXTREMELY PROMINENT COVERAGE TO THE CHINESE VISIT, EMPHASIZING THE MUTUAL SOCIALIST ORIENTATION OF GUYANA AND THE PRC. THE OFFICIAL JOINT PRESS RELEASE STATED THAT TALKS WERE HELD ON "STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC, TECHNICAL, AND CULTURAL COOPERATION" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND ON A "WIDE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS."

5. THE NEWSPAPER OF THE MOSCOW-LEANING PEOPLES PROGRESSIVE PARTY, THE "MIRROR", HOWEVER, WHILE SOMEWHAT SMUGLY CONFIDENTIAL

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REFRAINING FROM DIRECT COMMENT ON THE VISIT IN ITS OWN EDITORIAL SPACE, REPRINTED A VIRULENT MAY 31 ARTICLE FROM GRANMA, THE CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY NEWSPAPER, ATTACKING CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES ON THE OCCASION OF NATIONAL SECURITY ADVICE BRZEZINSKI'S VISIT TO THE PRC. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCES REPORT THAT THE SAME ARTICLE WAS DISTRIBUTED RECENTLY BY THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN GEORGETOWN AT A RECEPTION FOR THE NEW TASS CORRESPONDENT.

6. PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PTOLEMY REID BOTH ACCEPTED INVITATIONS TO VISIT CHINA, WHILE BURNHAM ASKED KENG PIAO TO EXTEND AN INVITATION TO VISIT GUYANA TO PRC PREMIER HAO KUN-FENG AND VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING. (BURNHAM VISITED CHINA IN 1975.)

7. COMMENT: WHILE THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO HAVE RECEIVED LITTLE OR NO CHINESE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE AS A RESULT OF THE VISIT, IT UNDOUBTEDLY HELPED PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM BURNISH HIS NEW MARXIST-SOCIALIST IMAGE, FOLLOWING AS IT DID IN CLOSE SUCCESSION BURNHAM'S VISITS IN APRIL AND MAY TO THE USSR, EAST GERMANY, AND NORTH KOREA. THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT THE BURNHAM

LED REGIME HAS BEEN LESS THAN CONTENT WITH THE LEVEL OF
ASSISTANCE RECEIVED FROM SOVIETS AND CUBANS, AND
BURNHAM MAY HAVE FOUND IT USEFUL TO REMIND HIS FELLOW
MARXIST THAT THERE ARE OTHER ROUTES TO SOCIALISM AND
OTHERS FROM WHOM SUPPORT MAY BE DERIVED. FINALLY IT
MAY BE PRESUMED THAT THE PRC VISITORS DID NOT MISS THE
OCCASION ON THE EVE OF THE NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS'
MEETING IN HAVANA TO CONVEY ITS RESERVATIONS ABOUT SOVIET
AND CUBAN THIRD WORLD POLICIES.
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